

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 BELEM 00011 062142Z
ACTION SCS-06

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FM AMCONSUL BELEM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0713

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY

UNCLAS BELEM 0011

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TAGS: CASC

SUBJ: ARMED ATTACK ON DAVIS FAMILY

REF: A) BECELIA-ARENALES TELCONS JAN. 5 B)BRASILIA 8625 OF
OCT 19, 1977 AND PREVIOUS

CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST

1. SUMMARY. TWO MEMBERS OF US CITIZEN DAVIS FAMILY, WHOSE LOCAL LANDHOLDINGS HAVE BEEN OBJECT OF LONG AND SOMETIMES VIOLENT DISPUTE, WERE SHOT AT SEVERAL TIMES BY SQUATTERS JANUARY 1. THOUGH NO INJURIES RESULTED, INCIDENT WAS MOST SERIOUS SINCE THREE FAMILY MEMBERS WERE KILLED 1-1/2 YEARS AGO AND THUS RAISES NEW CONCERN FOR SAFETY OF DAVISES. CONSUL IS MAKING REPRESENTATIONS WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO EXPRESS CONCERN AND HOPE THAT SECURITY MEASURES WILL BE APPROPRIATELY STRENGTHENED. END SUMMARY.

2. ON JANUARY 5, EMMA DAVIS (DAUGHTER) SENT TO CONSULATE COPIES OF INCIDENT REPORTS INVOLVING SQUATTERS ON DAVIS PROPERTY WHICH SHE PERIODICALLY SUBMITS TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES. ONE OF THESE DESCRIBED JANUARY 1 SHOOTING THAT OCCURRED WHEN TWO DAVIS BROTHERS WERE DISMANTLING A SHACK BUILT BY SQUATTERS (COPY OF REPORT POUCED ADDRESSEES). ACCORDING TO REPORT, NO INJURIES RESULTED FROM SHOOTING, BUT DAVIS CAR WAS STRUCK ELEVEN TIMES.

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3. BECAUSE OF APPARENT SERIOUSNESS OF INCIDENT, BELEM PRINCIPAL OFFICER PHONED MISS DAVIS, WHO WAS IN BELEM, TO GET MORE DETAILS. SHE CAME TO CONSULATE SAME MORNING TO DISCUSS MATTER, TOGETHER WITH ONE OF BROTHERS WHO HAD BEEN FIRED UPON. LATTER SAID HE HAD NO DOUBT THAT SQUATTERS WERE SHOOTING TO KILL. ONE BULLET THROUGH CAR WINDSHIELD MISSED INTENDED VICTIM BY ONLY FEW INCHES. BOTH

DAVISES SAID THAT INCIDENT SUGGESTS THREAT OF NEW VIOLENCE ON THEIR PROPERTY WHERE TEN AMERICANS -- MOSTLY FAMILY MEMBERS -- ARE NOW RESIDING.

4. DAVISES HAD REPORTED SHOOTING TO AUTHORITIES BUT EXPRESSED DOUBT THAT THEIR SECURITY SITUATION WOULD IMPROVE MUCH AS RESULT. IN MEANTIME, 'ROUTINE' INCURSIONS AND THEFTS BY SQUATTERS CONTINUE AT USUAL PACE.

5. ON JANUARY 6, BELEM PRINCIPAL OFFICER CALLED ON ACTING CHIEF OF PUBLIC SECURITY FOR STATE OF PARA COLONEL ARTHUR CORREIA DA SILVA TO EXPRESS CONCERN OVER SHOOTING AND CONTINUING USG INTEREST IN SITUATION. CORREIA, WHO IS WELL ACQUAINTED WITH DAVIS CASE, SAID HE TOOK VERY SERIOUS VIEW OF INCIDENT AND PROMISED EVERY EFFORT TO APPREHEND PERPETRATORS. HE URGED CONSUL TO SUBMIT WRITTEN REPRESENTATION WHICH HE SAID HE WOULD BRING TO IMMEDIATE ATTENTION OF HIS CHIEF UPON LATTER'S RETURN TO BELEM JAN. 7. CONSUL AGREED AND WILL SEND DOCUMENT THIS P.M. LATER IN DAY, CONSUL CALLED ON CHIEF OF STAFF OF 8TH MILITARY REGION COL. ROBERTO MONTEIRO DE OLIVEIRA. HE IS ALSO FAMILIAR WITH AND SYMPATHETIC TO PLIGHT OF DAVISES AND HAD ALREADY COMMUNICATED NEWS OF JAN. 1 SHOOTING, WHICH HE LEARNED OF DIRECTLY FROM EMMA DAVIS, TO ARMY BRIGADE NEAREST TO SITE OF INCIDENT. MONTEIRO OBSERVED, HOWEVER, THAT UNLESS LAND DISPUTES REACH CRISIS PROPORTIONS, ARMY'S ROLE IS LIMITED TO PROVIDING MORAL SUPPORT AND OCCASIONAL LOGISTIC HELP, E.G. COMMUNICATIONS, UNCLASSIFIED

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TO LANDHOLDERS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES. MONTEIRO ADDED THAT PROBLEM, WHICH DAVISES SHARE WITH ALL OTHER LARGE LANDOWNERS IN STATE, DEFIES SOLUTION OWING TO INCREASING DEMAND FOR LAND IN REGION PLUS DIFFICULTIES OF LAW ENFORCEMENT IN REMOTE AREAS.

6. PLAN TO MAKE APPROACH TO STATE PROSECUTOR GENERAL AT EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY.
BECELIA

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